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highway financing*

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CITY OF PHOENIX • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

MARGARET T. HANCE
MAYOR

May 21, 1982

The Honorable Eldon Rudd
U.S. House of Representatives
1110 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear ~~Mr. Rudd:~~ *Eldon,*

The Papago Freeway-Interstate 10 has long been a key element in the transportation plan for the Phoenix urban area. It will provide needed traffic service to the heartland of the city, to Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport, to the western portions of our city, and will connect to the completed portions of Interstate 10 to the west and east. It has been long awaited. It has been part of the interstate system for nearly two decades. Its construction is urgently needed now! As you know, Phoenix is way behind any major urban area in America in the development of a freeway/expressway system.

A serious funding shortfall for the completion of the Papago Freeway-Interstate 10 in this urban area is developing. We believe there are important actions that can be taken promptly by the Congress and Administration to greatly alleviate the funding shortfall for the Papago Freeway as well as for the entire highway program throughout the United States. My purpose is to set forth in general concept those actions we believe need urgent attention.

First and foremost, we support Secretary Drew Lewis' proposal and urge a five cent per gallon increase in the Federal Highway User Fee. This attacks the problem at its heart - lack of funds.

We advocate that of this five-cent increase, four cents be distributed to the Interstate and other principal federal-aid programs, including the urban system, and one cent for transit capital improvements. Early enactment of this would expedite progress on the Papago. The urban system funding is of national interest to collect and distribute interstate traffic and is of key importance to cities with their great street needs.

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Most important from a national point of view, the increased user fee would put people to work. Further, the creation of new wealth for investment purposes that comes about from the construction of streets, highways, and transit capital improvements should be an important positive contribution to the national economy.

Second, obligation controls should not be used to prevent Arizona from spending its full apportionment of Federal-Aid Highway Funds each year. The full appropriation should be dispersed without reductions or time constraints to Arizona and the other states.

Third, the Secretary of Transportation should be given greater discretionary funds and none of the discretionary funds should be subject to obligation authority limitations.

The deadline of September 30, 1986, for the beginning of construction of interstate projects needs to be extended as does the Highway Trust Fund. An alternate would be to amend the law so that the deadline would not apply if sufficient Federal-Aid funds are not made available.

Finally, the substantial funds being held in the Federal Highway Trust Fund need to be released over the next two or three years to help accelerate such projects as the Papago-Interstate 10. We believe the leverage to the economy and employment by such action would more than compensate the overall federal finances.

We urge that these five actions be taken with all dispatch in order to guarantee completion of the entire Papago-Interstate 10 and to benefit the national highway program and thus employment and the economy of the entire nation.

Please let me know of your feelings and plans on these matters and what I might do to further their prompt progress through Congress.

Sincerely,

Margaret

Margaret T. Hance
M A Y O R

cc: City Council
Governor Babbitt ✓
State Transportation Board
Mayor Murphy, City of Tucson
Mr. Ordway, Director, Transportation
Mr. Beals, President of NLC
Mr. Gunther, President, USCM
Mr. Hanson, President, ARTBA

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